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Jenny's New Year's Sleigh-Ride.

Every body said young Blackwood was in love with pretty Jenny Lee. So also, said his long-continued attention; so said his manner; so said his eyes; but so did not say his tongue.

It was provoking, for he had every reason to hope. Jenny's shy, pretty manner told him almost as plain as words, "Speak, and I am yours for the asking." But Mr. Blackwood did not speak; and what was worse, dog-in-the-manger-like, he kept others away from what he did not seem disposed to enjoy himself. His brow would grow black as a thunder cloud, did any other young man so much as dare to speak to his Jenny; for any one to ask her to dance was an unheard-of temerity. He arrogated to himself the exclusive right of waiting on her; of directing her; yes, sometimes of scolding her.

Yet with all this assumption of supremacy, my lord had never deigned to declare his love; never offered his hand; no engagement whatever existed between them. Everybody thought it very strange, and Jenny pouted a little, and, in her inmost heart, thought so too.

How Jenny had plenty of spirit in general, and this made it all the more vexatious, that she should be so meekly tame and patient in this particular case. It was truly annoying to a looker-on, to see her so imposed upon and lorded over by one who had not the shadow of a right to control her.

The fact is, and I may as well confess it, the poor little thing was so much in love, that she did not know how to manage at all.

So things went on, and so, perhaps, they might have been going on to this day, but all at once, I know not whether from some hint from a friend, or that Jenny's native spirit was at last aroused, certain it is that a great and notable change came over her manner.

A charming sleighing excursion had been projected for the approaching New Year's day. About ten gentlemen, and as many ladies, were to make the party. They were to ride about fifteen miles into the country, have a supper and dance, and then return to the city by moonlight. As each gentleman was to provide his own vehicle, and take a lady, there was an eager competition for the honor of escorting the favorite belles. Young Blackwood, with his usual nonchalance, was in no haste to secure Jenny's companionship, but in his own good time condescended to say to her, carelessly,

"Jenny, you will ride with me, of course?"

"Thank you," said Jenny, "but Mr. Collins has already been so kind as to ask me."

"Eh! What?" cried Blackwood, starting, and scarcely believing that he heard aright, "you don't mean to say that you are going with him?"

"Certainly."

Young Blackwood turned on his heel, and walked away. He felt himself an indignant and ill-used man. The shocking bad temper into which he fell was far from being sweetened by finding that his dilatoriousness had procured him the honor of escorting a young lady, worthy, doubtless, but somewhat faded, and very silly; the last choice of all who were to be of the party.

New Year's day arrived, bright and propitious, the snow is in excellent order for sleighing.

It had been arranged that the whole party should assemble at a certain rendezvous, so as to set out together, and as the appointed time approached, one gay sleigh after another might be seen whirling to the spot. The prancing horses, covered with silver bells; the bells' merry jingle; the various colors of the ladies' plaids and dresses; the rich fur robes, with their bright lining; and better still, the joyous, rosy faces, and the sound of ringing laughter, made up an inspiring and brilliant scene.

One countenance only looked out of keep-

ing with the gay occasion. It was our poor Blackwood's as he sat gloomy and taciturn, beside his elder companion. His eye glanced furtively towards Mr. Collins's sleigh; he saw Jenny's face, bright and fresh as a rose; he heard her gaily laugh at some witticism of her companion's; he saw that companion's glance of admiration, and he grew ten times more taciturn than before. I am afraid poor Miss Moody found him very dull, and that the ride was as intolerable to her as it was to him.

It was over at last, however; and now, having assembled in the large, cheerful, old country house, and having partaken of the good, warm, bountiful country supper, laid in a room where glowed a bright, hospitable fire, arrangements were being made for the promised and eagerly expected dance.

On repairing to the dancing room, where most of the company were assembled, Mr. Blackwood's eye glanced in search of Jenny's; she was not there, and conjecturing that some adjustment of her dress detained her up stairs, he sauntered up and down the hall, nervously waiting for her.

The fact is, he had determined to make his peace with her by the presentation of a propitiatory bouquet. He had procured a very rare and beautiful one in the city, and had, by taking infinite pains to protect it from the frost, succeeded in bringing it thither unharmed.

Jenny soon came tripping gaily down the stairs. Blackwood in his heart thought her the sweetest and loveliest creature in the world and that he would give his right hand to win one of her old smiles. With a timidity quite new to him, he presented his flowers, and begged the honor of her hand for the first dance.

Jenny carelessly thanked him—

"She was engaged to Mr. Collins."

"Might he hope for the next, then?"

"No; she was engaged to Mr. Summers."

"Or the next?"

"She had promised Mr. Howell."

Young Blackwood bit his lip, and his old ill-humor returned; he went into the dancing room, and sat sullenly in a corner, chewing the cud of his bitter fancy, and meditating on what he thought his flagrant wrongs.

He watched Jenny, gay and brilliant, dancing with first one gentleman, then another, laughing and chatting merrily all the time.

In truth, the gentlemen, pleased to see her once released from thralldom, crowded round her, and paid her so much attention, that she was really the belle of the evening. Blackwood's jealous eye saw everything; he saw his own bouquet thrown aside, while another, presented by he knew not whom, Mr. Collins, perhaps, was carried constantly in her hand and carefully cherished; he noticed every glance of admiration directed to her, he observed every smile she bestowed.

"By George," he muttered at last, between his clenched teeth, "there's not a man in the room who is not in love with her! and she, the coquette—the flirt—the—the—the little jilt—I do believe she returns their affection!"

This absurd generalization of his jealousy, might have opened the eye of a cooler man, but Blackwood was almost beside himself with apprehension, lest the treasure which he had by some strange menial process, come to consider his own, should be stolen from him. He felt the instability of his claims upon her, he was alarmed beyond reason by her change of manner.

If he thought, she had at last grown tired of him, (he felt sure she had loved him once,) if she were thinking of some one else, what remained for him, but to throw himself into the river, or go crazy, for life had lost every charm for him.

The thought of her riding home with Mr. Collins was wormwood to him. He dwelt upon it till the idea became insupportable; he must do something to prevent it. Accordingly he went to the gentleman who had been voted master of ceremonies, and who

happened to be a particular friend of his and said, as carelessly as he could—

"Harwood, my good fellow, you must do something for me, I'll do as much for you any other time. Manage it so that Collins shall give up his partner to me when we go home. I have a particular reason for wishing it."

"Impossible, my dear Blackwood, what a strange request. Collins will never consent. The prettiest girl of the party, too."

"That's it, that's it," repeated the agonized lover; he'll be making love to her on the way home, and—he'll offer himself; men are so hasty about these things sometimes; and she'll accept him and—then I am wretched for life—that's all."

"I see, I see," returned his tried, smiling, "Well, I'll try what I can do for you."

How Harwood managed it, does not appear, but his good offices were successful. Mr. Collins meekly took his place beside poor Miss Moody.

Blackwood, highly elated, handed Jenny to his vehicle, sprang in after her, and off they set at a furious rate.

Little would it become me, as a delicate and high-minded historian, to pry into and report the secrets of a *tele-a-tete* sleigh ride. I shall only state what all the world knows that notwithstanding the speed with which they started, their sleigh was the last to reach home; and the next day it was no secret in B. that Jenny Lee was engaged to be married to young Mr. Blackwood.

In conclusion I would merely add, for the consolation of those innocent and inexperienced young ladies who may be displeased with the conclusion of my story, and inclined to pity my poor heroine, condemned to such a morose, tyrannical Blue Beard of a husband, that married ladies will perhaps take a different view of the case.

I leave it for them to conjecture, however, whether it is probable that the girl who had learned how to manage her lover, was likely to forget the art when he became her husband.

IMITATIVE POWERS OF THE CHINESE.—It is generally supposed that the Chinese will not learn anything; but no people are more ready to learn if it is likely to be attended with advantage. They have lately been taught to make glass, and turn out bronze-argand-lamps and globes emblazoned with the London maker's name all complete; and actually export these lamps to Batavia. They like putting an English name to their commodities, and are as free with the word "patent" as any manufacturer in Germany. They excel in the manufacture of locks, particularly padlocks. One of my friends gave an order to a tradesman to varnish a box, furnished with a Chubb's lock, of which he had two keys, and one of these he sent with the box, retaining the other himself. When the box came back, he found that his key would not turn the lock, though the one he had given to the tradesman acted very well. Thinking that some trick had been played, he accused the man of having changed the lock; and after some evasion, he acknowledged the fact, stating that, on examination he found it such an excellent one, that he took it off and kept it, making another exactly like it, with maker's name and every thing complete, except that the original key would not open it. Their mechanical contrivances generally have some defect of this kind. They have never made a watch that will keep time, though they greatly prize watches, and usually carry two. If you ask the reason of this fashion, their reply is: "Suppose one makes sick, the other can walk."—[A Sketcher's Tour Round the World.]

The Dunkirk Journal says that a gentleman passed through that village, en route for Cincinnati, with some twelve native Chinese tea culturists, for the purpose of testing the practicability of growing tea in the vicinity of Cincinnati.

The Violin Trick.

Some days ago there presented himself before a dealer in curiosities, at the Palais Royal, a young man poorly clothed. "Sir," said he, showing a violin which he carried, "I am a musical artist; this is a season of balls and soirees; I have just had a long illness, which has exhausted my purse; my only black coat is in pawn; I would be much obliged if you will lend me ten francs to redeem it. I would leave one of the violins you see; for I have two. It is an excellent instrument. I will return to take it again as soon as, thanks to my coat, I shall have earned some money at balls and parties." The young man had such an honest bearing that the dealer lent him ten francs and kept the violin, which he hung up in the shop.

The next day but one a gentleman, well dressed, wearing at his button-hole the ribbon of the Legion of Honor, was choosing from the dealer's stock of goods some shell work. Seeing the violin, he took it up, examining it narrowly. "What is the price of that instrument?" said he. "It is not mine," replied the shop-keeper, and he related how he came to possess it. "This violin," continued the unknown, "is worth money; it is a Cremona. Perhaps its owner is ignorant of its value. If he returns offer him two hundred francs for it. He is a needy artist, who, it may be, will be obliged, and who can play just as well on another violin." Then handing fifty francs to the shopman, the unknown added, in taking his leave, "You will keep that for yourself if the affair succeeds. I will return in a few days."

Two days after the young man re-appeared, bringing the ten francs to redeem his violin, for which the dealer offered him two hundred francs. After some hesitation he agreed, pocketed the money and withdrew, lamenting the sad necessity which compelled him to part with his favorite instrument. At the end of a week the dealer, not having seen the decorated gentleman, became suspicious. He carried the violin to an instrument maker, who offered him three francs for it. He acknowledged then, though a little late, that he had been the dupe of two knaves, whom he described to the police.

Mr. Fuller of the New York Mirror, speaking of the natural richness of that portion of the country through which the Rock Island Excursionists will pass, says:

"We must tell the sportsmen that game is fat and abundant—and the farmer, that the soil is rich and inexhaustible. The prairie chickens rise in pairs and fly away on either side within gun shot from the cars; and the virgin earth is wooingly waiting for the hand of man. What a mighty preparation is here for feeding the multitudes of the future, who are destined to 'live in clover' in these boundless gardens. And why, O why, will men reek, and rot, and steal, and starve, in all our crowded, sickly, filthy cities, while these smiling plains, like hale and healthy rural maidens, are longing in all their lonely loveliness to repay the cares and labors of husbandry."

Hannibal, the eccentric colored preacher of the New York Picayune, touches up a certain class of beings in the following unique style:

"De rooster am de hen; and aldo he lay no eggs nor hatches no chickens, enny body wold tink, by seen' him strut round the barnyard, dat he laid all de eggs and brought up all the chickens. He does de best to make you tink he does it all, for no sooner does a hen drap an egg, dan he sets up as loud a cacklin' as de hen herself, in order to pull de wool ober de eyes ob us silly fellers, and make us believe he done it, when he am, no more capable ob doin' de same dan I am. How much like some lazy husbands in dis kongregation I could menshun, who let der wives do all de work, and take all de car' ob de family, while dey do all de cacklin'?"